

Wound care

Information for patients, relatives and carers



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Following surgery, most wounds will have a dressing on. The information below will provide some guidance on how best to support your healing.

WOUND CARE

- All surgical dressings should ideally remain dry and in place for 48 hours to allow the skin to close.
- If your dressing gets disrupted (i.e. peeling/ lifting) within the first 48 hours please make an appointment with a nurse / GP surgery to have this reviewed and changed.
- If a dressing change is required after 48 hours then this could be undertaken by yourself if you have been given the information by the nursing team on how to do this. It's important to know what to look out for in your wound site. In some cases, dressings can be left off if the consultant has agreed.
- If a replacement dressing is required, your local pharmacy may be able to support with this.
- Showering is possible but best advised after the initial 48 hours.
- Avoid activities or contact sports that may create pressure on the wound. This can be advised by your consultant.

SURGICAL INCISION

- Your incision may have stitches, clips or glue to help with healing and it is advised that these stay dry for 48 hours and may be covered with a dressing during this time.
- After this you can start to get the area wet, but don't soak the wound. Dab the area dry with a clean towel or gauze rather than rub with a towel.
- The stitches or clips will need to be removed by a nurse. Please make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP surgery or with the outpatient team as directed.

WOUND INFECTION

Most surgical wounds will heal without any problems. However, one possible complication is a wound infection, which occurs when bacteria starts to grow in the wound. This can slow down the healing process.

Wound infections can usually be treated with special dressings and antibiotics. In more severe cases, additional surgery may be necessary. It's important to identify and treat an infection as early as possible for the best results. Therefore, it's crucial to know the signs and symptoms of a wound infection while recovering at home.

It's normal to have a small amount of clear, watery discharge from a wound, but if you notice anything unusual, it's important to seek medical attention.

What to look out for:

- A 'pus like' discharge leaking from the wound
- The skin around the wound becoming red, painful or hot to the touch
- An unpleasant smell coming from the wound area
- Feeling generally unwell or having a temperature.

If you develop any of these signs and symptoms or have any concerns about your wound, please contact your consultant, the Clinic or your GP as soon as possible.

You can contact the Clinic on
+44 (0)20 7935 4444 and ask for the
Clinical Site Team or your ward.